AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for accommodating optical fiber, comprising:

a length of optical fiber comprising a rare earth for absorbing optical energy provided to the length of optical fiber; and

a body comprising an inwardly facing surface comprising a helical groove receiving a plurality of loops of said length of optical fiber.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said plurality of loops are substantially coaxial.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 comprising a second body that can be mated with the body, said second body having an outer surface that faces said inwardly facing surface of said body when said bodies are mated.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said second body can be removeably and replaceably mated with said body.

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for accommodating optical fiber, comprising:

a body comprising an inwardly facing surface adapted for receiving a plurality of loops of a length of optical fiber, said body including at least a portion wherein said inwardly facing surface is continuous between two adjacent loops;

a second body that can be mated with the body, said second body having an outer surface that faces said inwardly facing surface of said body when said bodies are mated; and

wherein said second body comprises a split ring that can be compressed for facilitating mating of said second body with said body

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said body comprises at least one of aluminum and copper.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said body generally comprises a ring shape.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said body comprises means for increasing heat transfer to or from the body.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 comprising at least one passageway for a section of said length of fiber to pass from said plurality of loops.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein said passageway is arranged such that said section of said length of fiber from said loop enters said passageway substantially along a tangent to one of said plurality of loops.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein one or more of said loops of said plurality is circular.

13 - 17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) An optical apparatus, comprising:

a length of optical fiber comprising a rare earth, said length of optical fiber comprising a plurality of loops;

a body comprising an inwardly facing surface receiving said plurality of loops of said length of optical fiber;

a second body that can be mated with said body, said second body having an outer surface that faces said inwardly facing surface of said body when said bodies are mated; and

wherein said second body comprises a split ring that can be compressed for facilitating mating of said second body with said body.

19 - 37. (Canceled)

38. (Original) A method of disposing optical fiber with an optical apparatus for accommodating the optical fiber, comprising:

providing an optical fiber;

providing first and second bodies mated together, the mated bodies defining at least one passage bounded at least in part by the first and second bodies;

disposing a length of the optical fiber into at least one loop within the at least one passage while providing relative movement between the first and second bodies.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein disposing the length of optical fiber includes passing the length of fiber through an outside region surrounded at least in part by one of the bodies.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the first body, when mated with the second body, surrounds the second body and wherein moving one of the bodies includes rotating the first body.

41. (Original) The method of claim 40 wherein the first and second bodies each comprise a ring shape.

42. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said optical energy to be absorbed by said rare earth can have a first wavelength and said length of optical fiber can convert said optical energy to optical energy having a second wavelength that is different than said first wavelength and wherein said length of optical fiber is normally multimode at said second wavelength.

43. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[41]] 42 wherein said plurality of loops are shaped such that for optical energy having said second wavelength higher order modes are attenuated substantially more than a fundamental mode of said length of optical fiber.

44. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 comprising a light source optically coupled to said length of optical fiber for providing optical energy to said length of optical fiber.

45. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[43]] 44 wherein said light source can provide said optical energy for said rare earth to absorb, said optical energy having a first wavelength, and wherein said apparatus comprises a second light source optically coupled to said optical fiber for providing light having a second wavelength that is different than said first wavelength.

46. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[43]] 44 wherein said light source can provide said optical energy for said rare earth to absorb, said optical energy having a first wavelength, and wherein said length of optical fiber can convert said optical energy to optical energy having a second wavelength that is different than said first wavelength, and wherein said apparatus includes at least one optical fiber grating that forms at least part of a laser cavity for light having said second wavelength.

47. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said plurality of loops have substantially the same radius of curvature.